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AUTHORITY

**Adjutant General's Office [Army] ltr dtd  
29 Apr 1980**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

AD824667

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (13 Dec 67) FOR OT RD 670494

19 December 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 69th Maintenance Battalion (GS), Period Ending 31 July 1967

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation by USACDC in accordance with paragraph 6f, AR 1-19 and by USCONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d, AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from Lessons Learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
as

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Chief of Staff - OT-RD  
Wickham, S. C. 20310

JAN 5 1968

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 69th MAINTENANCE BATTALION(GS)  
APO 96312

OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR QUARTERLY PERIOD  
ENDING 31 JULY 1967

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## SECTION I: SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The 69th Maintenance Battalion(GS) was operational for 92 consecutive days during the period of 1 May 1967 to 31 July 1967.

During the first week of the quarter, two new companies were assigned to the battalion. The movement of these units across the beach and into their respective company areas progressed much more smoothly than the debarkation of the last company to join the battalion. Notification of the exact arrival date of these two companies, information not previously available on other arrivals, allowed the battalion to make many arrangements that materially assisted in the reception of these two units. The equipment of the new units arrived two days after the personnel, and off-loading began immediately. Not enough care was taken in the process of transferring equipment from ship to shore. As a result, many end items were damaged beyond repair by improper handling. This battalion is well aware that time is a critical factor in port operations. It seems however, that more care should be taken with equipment that has such specialized capability as that maintained within a General Support Maintenance Battalion. Unlike the more common items of materiel, this equipment cannot be replaced within a short time frame. As such, the battalion must do without some equipment that would contribute to the successful accomplishment of the mission.

Another area of difficulty was in the acquisition of equipment densities. Many newly arrived units entered the command and were immediately assigned a mission with little thought being given to maintenance of their equipment. This battalion tried to alleviate the problem by seeking out these new units as soon as they arrived, however, in some cases this was not possible. Even after providing the new arrivals with instructions and forms for submitting equipment densities, many ignored the assistance being offered. It was not until their equipment began to come into the Direct Support shops that the importance of this data became apparent to them. Since their support unit had no information on their equipment, no action had been taken on obtaining repair parts, and no manuals were available on some of the more exotic items. The result of this lack of information was, in many cases, relatively new equipment being deadlined for excessive periods of time. To prevent the recurrence of such incidents, it is recommended all advance parties carry with them a complete listing of their unit's equipment. It should become SOP for these parties to seek out their maintenance support units or advise operations as to their arrival in the area so that they could be assigned to some support unit.

The battalion was also faced with large blocks of its officers and key NCO's rotating in a very short time frame. Replacements were scarce, especially for NCO's, yet the battalion was able to cushion the effect by transferring personnel within the subordinate units. One hurdle that was not cleared was the siphoning off of personnel by higher headquarters before they reached battalion level. This

of assigned personnel, though necessary at times, creates problems for the battalion, as some key positions must be filled by the proper MOS and grade.

During this quarter, the battalion underwent its annual General Inspection. After a week of intensive inspection, the AGI team concluded the Battalion was the finest organization of its type in Viet Nam. The monthly Battalion Commander's inspections, conducted by the battalion staff, played a significant role in preparing the subordinate units of the battalion for the AGI.

## SECTION II: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### PART I: OBSERVATIONS(LESSONS LEARNED)

#### Item: Advance Notice of Technical Assistance Personnel Arrivals

Discussion: This battalion was designated host unit for two field service representatives from the Continental Engine Manufacturing Company. There was no advance notice given concerning their arrival date, their orders, the reason for their assignment, or copies of their contract. Had such information been available prior to their arrival, the battalion could have developed a scheduled program based on their contract and responsibilities. As it turned out, the technical representatives were without transportation, without rations cards, and probably unsure of their mission and responsibilities. Each of these factors contributed to the subsequent deterioration of their morale. Had the battalion received notification of their arrival, it would have been possible to utilize these personnel immediately. However, it took 30-45 days of trial and error employment to discover their talents, mission, and responsibilities.

Observation: Copies of both orders and contracts pertaining to technical representatives should be furnished the lowest element of command involved in the utilization of technical assistance personnel in sufficient time to permit proper planning for their reception and utilization.

#### Item: Personnel Turbulence

Discussion: When a complete unit is shipped to Viet Nam, a tremendous rotational hump is created approximately eleven months later. Unless personnel changes are made within the unit, the capability of the unit is completely lost within a matter of days, when the normal rotation date of the personnel arrives.

Observation: Personnel of a unit that is shipped intact should be transferred to other units with similar MOS structures. This action distributes the rotational hump among several units within the battalion, thereby lessening the impact on any one organization.

#### Item: Collection, Classification, and Salvage Company (TOE 29-139F)

Discussion: A type B Collection, Classification, and Salvage Company without proper augmentation is too small to handle the mission of a full strength company for an extended period. For example, only five(5) Army personnel are assigned to the Heavy Lift and Evacuation Section of the company with the mission of providing the lift capability of the company, transporting heavy material, and performing limited recovery and evacuation. This one section has approximately

8

25 pieces of heavy equipment. The amount of the equipment is so great, the personnel have difficulty in keeping up the operator maintenance. Their number also precludes operation of equipment necessary to deliver retrograde material to the Port for further shipment to CONUS.

Observation: A CC&S Company operating in Viet Nam should be augmented with trained US personnel. Reliance on employment of foreign nationals who have not had proper training on the equipment involved is deemed unwise. The available skills among indigenous personnel in this area of Viet Nam are limited to the very basic types of manual labor, requiring the military to perform all technical tasks. It is difficult to augment a type B unit with local civilian labor in Viet Nam and perform a mission.

Item: Maintenance Support Planning

Discussion: The US Army Support Areas are basically three: Saigon, Cam Ranh Bay, and Qui Nhon. Internally, each support area is divided again and specific sectors assigned to the maintenance elements within each sector. This division of territory was perhaps accomplished at a time when less than the present number of US and Allied troops were in-country or programmed for Viet Nam. Subsequent increases in troop strengths, with its increased equipment density, with no appreciable increase in maintenance capabilities, has placed an unrealistic workload on the maintenance units. To offset the impact, fragmentation of maintenance units has become commonplace. This battalion, as an example, has personnel located in six separate locales, either attached to and augmenting another maintenance unit or, functioning as an area maintenance facility. A complete study of the present and proposed personnel and equipment strengths and the capabilities of the present support troops in RVN, with possible realignment of support battalions and sectors, is deemed essential for continued responsive combat service support.

Observation: Fragmenting of units solves problems temporarily in one location while compounding them in another. Improper MTOE preparations, as far back as one year ago, with no knowledge of proposed troop increases, has necessitated the proselytizing of incoming units to fulfill unforeseen requirements. A reevaluation of the complete in-country maintenance capability is necessary for proper alignment of workload vs resources.

Item: Maintenance Support of ADPS Equipment

Discussion: The ADPS maintenance sections of the Signal Company(Depot)(TOE 11-158E) and of the Light Equipment Maintenance Company(GS)(TOE 29-134E) contain military personnel trained in the maintenance of ADP equipment. The equipment to be supported is leased from the manufacturers and is maintained by military personnel at unit level with direct back-up maintenance on call. This back-up maintenance

consists of the above type military support and/or manufacturers representatives. This duplication of available back-up support has resulted in the military maintenance personnel not being utilized as the units with ADP equipment normally request contractor assistance. As a result, military personnel cannot improve upon their knowledge and technical capabilities or be cross-trained and subsequently lose their proficiency.

Observation: With the availability of trained and qualified military ADPS repairmen in the theater, the employment of contractor technical representatives represents a costly duplication of identical skills. In addition, the dispersion of military units permits a more rapid response to a customer demand for service while permitting the military to maintain and improve upon their skills.

Item: Receipt of Supplies at Company Level

Discussion: Repair parts and sub-assemblies are being received at DSU's without proper documentation and through a variety of channels. Many of these items are being placed in stock without the receipts having first been processed through the NCR 500 Stock Accounting System. The result of this action is a high number of zero balances reflected in the tech supplies which, in reality, do not exist.

Observation: All items received for stockage must be processed through the NCR 500 stock accounting system to insure that accountability is accomplished and that items reflecting zero balances are actually not in stock. A continuous cyclic inventory, processed in a special work pack, established by the NCR 500, can maintain current data on all "on hand" items only if receipts are passed through the NCR 500 system.

Item: Instrument and Small Arms Repair

Discussion: The COSTAR concept makes no provision for fire control, instrument and small arms repair at the direct support unit level. This fact, combined with the number of float items in Viet Nam, places a tremendous strain on the Heavy Equipment Maintenance Companies that provide back-up support in the instrument and small arms field. Even if a float were available, the current COSTAR TOE does not authorize the direct support unit proper equipment to remove and replace fire control instruments or repair small arms.

Observation: Each direct support unit under COSTAR should have a complete instrument repair and small arms capability in order to permit the successful accomplishment of the DS mission.

Item: Commercial Forklifts

Discussion: Some units in the CRB area were removing the load guard on their commercial forklifts. With the guard removed, loads were falling back into the lift cylinder causing damage to the

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piston rod. When the rod retracted back into the cylinder, it damaged the seal, causing leakage.

Observation: Load guards on commercial forklifts should remain mounted regardless of the circumstances.

Item: Lubrication of MHE

Discussion: Some units have job ordered rough terrain and commercial forklifts to the battalion DSU showing evidence of a lack of lubrication.

Observation: Lack of lubrication results in excessive wear on all moving parts. The environment of the Cam Ranh Bay area causes wear over and above what is normally expected or found elsewhere. In this area, lubrication should be performed after every 24 hour operating period and/or at least twice weekly.

Item: 20 Ton Crane Failures

Discussion: Improper operation of the 20 ton cranes in the extremely sandy environment of Cam Ranh Bay has resulted in an increase in power train failures. These failures are developing into a serious problem with resultant increased deadline rates.

Observations: Units operating 20 ton cranes in soft or sandy conditions must insure strict supervision of the operators. The TM 5-3810 series publications provide detailed instruction for operation under unusual conditions. Supervisors and operators must be familiar with these instructions.

Item: Pan Universal Coupling on the Clark Diesel Driven Tractor, Model 290M

Discussion: The pan universal coupling bolts should be checked daily when the equipment is in use since they loosen during operation. If the bolts loosen, the hitch ball becomes excessively worn.

Observation: Operators of the equipment in question should familiarize themselves with TM-5-2420-206-15 dated 15 June 1966, and in so doing should pay particular attention to page 134, figure 3-60 which illustrates the universal coupling. The bolts in question are item #5 of this figure.

## PART II: RECOMMENDATIONS

A. It is recommended that prior to the arrival of technical assistance personnel in-country, a copy of their orders or their firm's contract, or a letter from the Department of the Army Agency by whom they are employed, be provided the headquarters to be responsible for their utilization and control. It is further recommended that prior to their departure from CONUS to this Theater, verification of the requirement of these type personnel be accomplished.

B. It is recommended that personnel of similar MOS and grade, be intermingled in an attempt to eliminate, to the maximum extent possible, rotational humps.

C. It is recommended that, due to extremely limited skilled or semi-skilled labor in RVN, type B units not be deployed to this theater.

D. It is recommended that replacement enlisted personnel for Combat Service Support units be adequately programmed and controlled. It is further recommended that upon arrival in RVN, personnel be assigned to the specific unit requiring their skills and for which they were programmed.

E. It is recommended that the feasibility of employing trained, available, military personnel to repair ADPS equipment in lieu of contractor personnel be evaluated.

F. It is recommended that COST.R units document the instances where shortcomings and weaknesses in organization, personnel, and equipment may exist, and submit their recommendations to the appropriate Department of the Army Agency charged with their specific TOE preparations.

G. It is recommended that all DSU's initiate a continuous cyclic inventory, to include cross-referencing between DSU's utilizing the capabilities of the NCR 500 system.

SECTION III: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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69th MAINTENANCE BATTALION(GS)

HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS DETACHMENT

128th SIGNAL COMPANY(D)

129th MAIN SUPPORT COMPANY(DS)

135th HEAVY EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE COMPANY(GS)

510th ENGINEER COMPANY(MDS)

557th LIGHT MAINTENANCE COMPANY(DS)

633rd COLLECTION, CLASSIFICATION AND SALVAGE COMPANY

*Orlando Garcia*  
ORLANDO GARCIA  
LTC, OrdC  
Commanding

13

AVCA CR-D-SIPT 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS US ARMY DEPOT CAN RANK BAY, APO 96312 5 August 1967

THRU: Commanding Officer, US Army Support Command, Cam Ranh Bay, ATTN:  
AVCA CR-10, APO 96312  
Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-H, APO  
96307  
Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96375  
Commander-in-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MG, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

Subject report from the 69th Maintenance Battalion (GS) has been re-  
viewed by this headquarters. It adequately reflects significant events  
in that battalion for this reporting period.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: CRB 3483

  
STEPHEN R. LEVINE  
2LT, AGC  
Asst Adjutant

1 Incl  
as (quint)

Cy Furn:  
ACSFOR, DA (2 cy)

AVCA CR-10 (5 Aug 67) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND CAM RANH BAY, APO 96312 22 AUG 1967

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96307  
Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, APO 96375  
Commander-in-Chief, US Army Pacific, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

The inclosed Operational Report submitted by the 69th Maintenance Battalion (DS) adequately reflects the activities of the unit for the period indicated with the following comments:

a. The unit identification code is WDD8AAA.

b. Section I Comment, problems presented regarding care in the off loading of equipment and receiving density lists are problems that can be resolved at local command level and should not be a subject of this report.

c. Section II Comment, the following items noted can be handled at this command level and should not be addressed as problem areas in this report:

(1) Technical assistance representatives were expedited on a priority basis from CONUS because of the high failure rate of multi-fuel engines and planning time was not possible.

(2) Directive of higher headquarters is specific regarding personnel planning for rotational humps and recommendations of battalion is what they have been directed to accomplish.

(3) There is currently a request to convert the 633rd Collection, Classification and Salvage Company to a Class "A" unit at USARV Headquarters. The battalion is aware of this action.

(4) The battalion is also well aware that support planning has been a continuous process, as they have participated and contributed to this planning. Two maintenance units have been received by the battalion in the past 4 months as a result of this planning. Also well known is the fact that COSTAR maintenance units will not exactly fit the requirements of any one area and shortfall areas have to be met by this battalion which has over 70% of the maintenance personnel of the command and the only heavy equipment maintenance company.

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22 Aug 67

AVCA CR-10 (5 Aug 67)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

(5) This command should be well aware it is the unit's responsibility to submit MTOE's as required and there is no need for this recommendation in this report.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*C P Armstrong*

C P. ARMSTRONG  
CAPTAIN AGC  
ASST. AG

1 Incl (2 copies)  
as

AVCA 70-0 (5 Aug 67)

3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967  
(LCS CEFOR 65)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST LOGISTICAL COMMAND, APO 96307

16  
9 SEP 1967

TO: Deputy Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN:  
AVHGC-DF, APO 96375

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by the 69th Maintenance Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1967 is forwarded.

2. Reference page 1, last paragraph, and page 7, paragraph D: Implementation of the recommendation can best be accomplished by the combined efforts of the reporting unit, its next higher headquarters, and USASUPCOM, Cam Ranh Bay.

3. Reference page 3, 1st item: Concur. It is standard procedure for all technical representatives - military, Department of the Army civilians, commercial firm representatives, and contract technicians having an interest in maintenance - to clear through and be processed by the Director of Maintenance, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command. In addition those commands who will receive the benefits of the assistance of these personnel are notified in advance of visits to preclude this type of undesirable circumstance. As this instance is considered an isolated case in comparison to the many other well coordinated visitations, no action is deemed necessary by this or higher headquarters.

4. Reference page 3, 3d item: Concur. A request for MOE action to increase the strength of the 633d CC&S Company from a type B organization to a full strength organization has been forwarded to USAMV for approval, due to the workload and the inability of the unit to hire local national personnel to fill authorized TOE shortages. Action should be taken by higher headquarters to approve this MOE as soon as possible.

5. Reference page 4, 1st item: Concur. Realignment of maintenance units are under constant study by this headquarters. Actions are in process which, if approved, will reunite these personnel with their parent organization. No action is required by higher headquarters.

6. Reference page 4, 2d item: Non-concur. Contractor personnel are still required to fill the technical gap between the manufacturer and military. This system has just been introduced into the country and at present not all units have this equipment even though they are programmed to receive it. Support units should maintain closer liaison

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AVCA CC-0 (5 Aug 67)

3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967  
(RCS CSFCK 65)

with their supported units to insure that military maintenance skills are utilized to the fullest extent. No action is required by higher headquarters as these contractor personnel are required to provide immediate backup support at this time.

7. Reference page 5, 2d item: Non-concur with the discussion that the COSTAR concept makes no provision for fire control, instrument, and small arms repair at the direct support unit level. The division direct support maintenance unit (CS), TOE 29-138F has this capability. In addition the main support company (CS), TOE 29-206F will have this capability when converted to the T series TOE. Concur with the observation that each direct support maintenance unit organized under the COSTAR concept have this capability. In many instances an individual DS unit must perform an area support mission which requires the unit to have this capability to effectively perform its mission. Recommend that higher headquarters incorporate a complete instrument repair and small arms repair capability in all COSTAR direct support maintenance units.

8. Reference page 6, 3d item: Non-concur. Investigation has revealed that this is an isolated case and is not a design fault.

9. Reference page 7, paragraph A: Concur. However, this headquarters already accomplishes verification of requirement for technical assistance personnel prior to their departure.

10. Reference page 7, paragraph C: Non-concur. There are many type B units which can effectively utilize local nationals.

11. Reference page 7, paragraph F: Concur. This headquarters has performed studies in this area for maintenance units within the command.

12. Concur with basic report as modified by indorsements.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: Lynx 430/782

1 Incl  
nc

*Timothy S O'Hara*  
TIMOTHY S. O'HARA  
1st, INF  
Acting Asst AG

B3

AVHGC-DST (5 Aug 67)

4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 July 1967 (RCS 75702-65) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES AR Y VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 : 967000

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 July 1967 from Headquarters, 69th Maintenance Battalion (GS) (DD8A) as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning Collection, Classification, and Salvage Company, item 3, page 3 and paragraph 4, 3d Indorsement: Concur with the requirement. USARV has submitted a request to OSD for two 135 space augmentations to bring the two CC&S Companies (218th and 633d) to Type A strength.

b. Reference item concerning Maintenance Support Planning, item 1, page 4; and paragraph 5, 3d Indorsement: Concur with the action being taken to realign maintenance units. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended. The reevaluation recommended should be accomplished to insure proper realignment of maintenance units.

c. Reference item concerning officer and enlisted rotations, last paragraph, page 1; paragraph D, page 7: Concur with comment of CG, 1st Logistical Command as stated in paragraph 2 of 3d Indorsement.

d. Reference item concerning advance notice of assistance personnel, 1st item, page 3 and paragraph 3, 3d Indorsement: Procedures already in operation within 1st Logistical Command are adequate to preclude errors of this type in the future.

e. Reference item concerning instrument and small arms repair, 2d item, page 5 and paragraph 7, 3d Indorsement: Nonconcur with comment in 2d item, page 5. Comment in paragraph 7, 3d Indorsement is correct.

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AVHGC-DST (5 Aug 67) and 1 OCT 1967  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lesson Learned for the Period Ending  
31 July 1967 (U.S. CSTOR-64)

f. Reference item concerning Fan, Universal Coupling. 3d item, page 6 and paragraph 8, 3d Indorsement: "Nonconcur. This is an isolated case and not a design failure. Bolts should be tightened to 1400 lb/ft torque. Correct torque is shown on data plate of scraper.

g. Reference item concerning ADPS maintenance, page 4, 2d item, and paragraph 6, 3d Indorsement.

(1) Concur with third indorsement that contractor personnel are required to back-up the military ADPS effort. Duplication of maintenance effort does not exist because the number of contract maintenance personnel are only the minimum required to back-up multiple systems. They could not possibly maintain all systems with the present workforce.

(2) In addition, military maintenance personnel are not supposed to call for contractor assistance until the problem is beyond their capability.

(3) A message has been sent to units having ADP equipment reiterating this back-up maintenance policy.

3. Unit will be notified of actions and comments by routine indorsement which returns this report.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
STANLEY R. SCHULTE  
Major, USA  
Adjutant General

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GPOP-DT(undtd) 5th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967  
from HQ, 69th Maint Bn (GS) (UIC: WDD8AA) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558

2 DEC 1967

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding  
indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



HEAVRIN SNYDER  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

2/1  
DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)	2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D. C. 20310	Unclassified
	2b. GROUP N/A

3. REPORT TITLE

Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 69th Maintenance Battalion (GS)

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations 1 May-31 July 1967

5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)

CO, 69th Maintenance Battalion (GS)

6. REPORT DATE Undated	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 17	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO. N/A	670494	
c.	9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.		

10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A	12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310
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13. ABSTRACT

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